

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated September 12, 2002, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 5 under 35 USC 112, citing informalities in the claim language. Claim 5 is rejected as anticipated by Applicants' Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). All claims are rejected as obvious over O'Hagan in view of Hudetz. Reconsideration is requested in view of the Amendments set forth above and the remarks herein.

In response to the rejections under 35 USC Section 112 claims 1 and 5 are amended to correct the informalities noted by the Examiner.

In response to the rejection of claim 5 as anticipated, applicants' undersigned attorney conducted a telephone interview with the Examiner on October 3, 2002. During the interview a discussion was had concerning the fact that the identification device on the slave unit uniquely identifies the slave unit, not merely the product code of the unit. Claim 5 is amended to clarify this issue. As amended the claim is clearly not anticipated by the Admitted Prior Art.

Applicants have carefully considered the rejection under 35 USC Section 103. Applicants have amended the independent claims to specify that the identification data and/or the bar code individually identifies the device.

Applicants' invention is a method and apparatus that greatly simplifies the process of initiating communication between a master device, such as a point of sale terminal, and a slave device, such as a portable bar code scanner that communicates with the master device over a radio data communications link. In connection with the use of such devices, each time a wireless

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device enters use, the master device must be provided with the unique network radio data address of the slave device. This occurs when a clerk opens a terminal for example, or when a portable scanner is changed because the battery is run down.

In accordance with the invention the slave device is provided with an identification device, such as a bar code, that individually identifies the device and can be associated with the wireless network address assigned to the device. When a terminal master device is initiated to communicate with a slave device, it merely becomes necessary to read the identification device and using the terminal processor arrange the master radio to assume control over the slave radio in the portable device.

The O'Hagan Patent describes a system that is similar to the prior art described by applicant in the specification, but as the Examiner recognizes, does not include a bar code representing an IP or network address on the wireless scanner. The Examiner asserts that the Hudetz Patent would suggest to a person skilled in the art to employ a bar-coded network address as an identifying code in the system of O'Hagan.

Applicants recognize that the Hudetz reference describes the use of either bar-coded IP addresses or UPC bar codes to assist the user in locating a web site. The bar codes described by Hudetz are not however individual, but repeated, for example in each copy of an advertisement or repeated UPC codes, printed the same on all packages of a product.

As set forth in the amended claims the identification data in the bar code or other identification device according to the invention individually identifies the device and enables the master device to determine the portable device's data communication address. Thus the bar code on each portable scanner used in a retail store would be different.

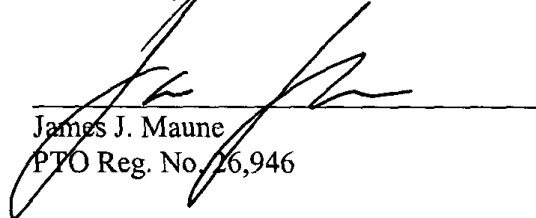
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The Hudetz patent fails to teach or suggest the use of individually identifying bar codes or other devices, and accordingly fails to suggest the combination claimed by applicants.

Accordingly the claims, as amended, are patentable.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James J. Maune', is written over a horizontal line.

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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

1. In a point of sale system for acquiring bar code data relating to a transaction, wherein a first bar code scanner is arranged to scan bar codes and provide data relating to scanned bar codes to a processor, the improvement comprising a second portable bar code scanner, said second scanner including a slave radio module for acting as a slave unit using a master-slave data communication protocol and said second scanner including an identifying bar code individually identifying said second scanner, and wherein there is provided a master radio module associated with said point of sale system and wherein said master radio module is arranged to act as a master for communication with said slave radio module in response to reading of said identifying bar code on said second scanner by said first bar code scanner.

5. A method for establishing a master/slave data communication link between a master device and a slave device , comprising:

providing a machine readable identification device on a slave [unit] device, said identification device including identification data individually identifying said slave device;

reading said identification device with a reader, other than said slave device, associated with said master unit to obtain said identification data;

determining a slave address of said slave [unit] device from said identification data; and

operating said master unit to associate with said slave [unit] device using said slave address.